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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0559
INFO RUEHDX/MOSCOW POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 002429

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EO 12958 DECL: 05/23/2017
TAGS PREL, PGOV, PINR, RS
SUBJECT: RUSSIAN REACTION TO LITVINENKO MURDER CHARGES
REF: LONDON 1997

Classified By: Ambassador William J. Burns. Reasons 1.4 (b and d).

1. (C) SUMMARY: The GOR is highly unlikely to extradite former FSB officer Andrey Lugovoy to Britain, citing constitutional and other legal pr

2. (C) On May 22, the UK's Crown Prosecution Service announced that it had sufficient evidence to request Lugovoy's extradition and to charge

EXTRADITION: OBSTACLES AND OPTIONS

3. (SBU) Both the Russian Constitution and the Criminal Code prohibit the GOR from extraditing Russian citizens, as is the case in several oth

4. (SBU) In a May 22 statement on its website, the MFA reiterated its readiness to cooperate further in an objective investigation into Litvir

5. (SBU) Other official and unofficial Russian reaction was overwhelmingly against the British request. Duma Speaker Boris Gryzlov said that t

6. (SBU) Independent Duma Deputy Vladimir Ryzhkov was one of the few who suggested Russia's international interests ought to take precedence c

BRITAIN'S NEXT STEPS

7. (C) Noting that the UK would be seeking an EU statement of support in urging Russia to agree to extradition (reftel), Brenton predicted the
MOSCOW 00002429 002 OF 002
with Moscow, and potentially problems in the EU-Russian relationship as well. Failing any progress, he reiterated the UK may reassess whether i

PUBLIC APATHY ABOVE ALL

8. (C) Ekho Moskvyy's Aleksey Venediktov told us separately there is little chance of a resolution soon, particularly given the rift in relatic

9. (C) Comment. It is highly unlikely that the GOR will yield its constitutional principle on extradtion. There is no indication that any Russ